

Director Report October 2018

Production & Programming

- Over the past month:
 - we provided the following on location coverage (staff-produced): 11 local government meetings, 1 community event (Ludlow PTG Harvest Fair), and 2 guest speaker presentations for Ludlow Rotary Club (Gov. Scott and reps. from Coolidge Solar).
 - volunteers & community producers have provided the following local programs: 8 church services & 4 soccer games
 - the studio was used to record 6 shows, which are in the current rotation (2 episodes of Ralph Pace's "Spotlight" show, a citizen commentary from Ralph Pace, the latest Chamber Update, a new episode of "Ludlow Memories" from BRAM, & "FOLA Presents").
 - received & produced 22 calendar announcements for the "bulletin board", from 13 different organizations
- We are providing in-kind production services towards the completion of a short documentary about the Jackson Gore paleo-Indian excavation from 2007, and what was found there. I visited the Archaeology Dept. at UVM to record a follow-up interview with the department head & State Archaeologist (it turns out, that dig and its findings provided to be significant). Video footage that I recorded in 2007 will be edited together with the follow-up interview.
- We completed the editing on a fire safety / prevention PSA that I recorded with John Cama in May, with Plymouth volunteer firefighters who responded to the large brush fire there. This will be a good PSA to run each Spring.
- For the 2nd year in a row, we have been awarded 2nd place in the "Nor'easter Awards", the annual video awards from the Alliance for Community Media- Northeast region. This year it was in the PSA / short program category, for the production we did profiling Weston Playhouse's new Walker Farm facility (last year, we earned 2nd place in the documentary category for "Irene- Ruin to Renewal", the collaboration project we did with Plymouth Historical Society. The award show is during this week's annual conference, which I am unable to attend. We will be receiving a certificate, to hang in our lobby. We should also be able to organize a photo opportunity at Walker Farm, for a news release
- "Bulletin Board material": We are experiencing an increase in the volume of calendar submissions / bulletin board announcements. Over the past month, we received 28 of them. However, most are sent as general news releases in mass emails, newsletters, and digests such as Front Porch Forum. In other words, we are being pro active by scanning all of these sources for relevant material. This requires a bit of work and is not the most efficient method of creating the bulletins. What I would like to see is more organizations submitting announcements to us specifically for the bulletin board, and ideally through our website. This is something we can promote and (hopefully) encourage people to do, now that we have some news to share in this area, with the installation of a second bulletin board server. I have been looking into ways we can make the bulletin board more engaging and dynamic, which might increase demand for it.

Fundraising

- Update on grant funding for the building project:
 - Submitted request for grant funding to the Anthony Marro Trust. Applications from Ludlow non profits were solicited by a local Trustee.

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- I have another application in process to the Mascoma Savings Bank charitable giving program.
- As mentioned before, I have been communicating with Tom Appel (Brattleboro-based New England Management Co.) about our project. His experience is with large commercial & non profit construction projects, and with securing funding in particular. He is well-versed with large federal grants and loan programs. He has provided some pro bono consultation in recent months, beginning with a meeting I had with him back in the Spring in Brattleboro, and he also provided some support to us when we were first dipping our toe into the waters of this project back in 2009-10. Long story short: he is developing a financing plan for us, which is still in the works; I have asked him to come meet with us to go over the details.

Equipment & Building

- Back in April, one of our main field production cameras was broken (it happened during an after school program in Mt. Holly). It was initially sent to VT Camera Works in Pittsford for a diagnosis & possible repair. It was there for 3 months before we learned that they could not fix it. I then sent it to Panasonic for a repair estimate, which came in at over \$2000. I decided we should file an insurance claim to cover either the repair or the replacement of the camera. Ludlow Insurance Agency is assisting with that claim. Sharon reported that the process was started.
- We are expecting bids to be coming in for the building project. We need to define a specific scope of work, which has been a little challenging, because of the budget & financing plan being in flux. John, Noah, and I met last week as the building committee to come up with a plan. Noah has provided those details in a report, which was emailed to the Board over the past weekend. We will spend some time at the meeting this week to go over this.

Administrative / Organizational

- Comcast v Vermont: Federal Judge Geoffrey Crawford, of US District Court in Burlington, denied Comcast's appeal, which argued that the requirements put into the renewal of its Certificate of Public Good (CPG) from the Public Utility Commission violates the companies First Amendment rights. Specifically, Comcast objected to what it has described as "unreasonable demands" made by VAN (on behalf of all PEG Access channels in the State), as well as mandated line extensions in rural areas. This was the first real activity in the federal case since the suit was filed in August 2017. This just the beginning and the real substance of the case has not yet taken shape. As a refresher as to what this means for Okemo Valley TV specifically: we are in a holding pattern with the pending renewal of our contract with Comcast (which expired 12/31/2017) until after the conclusion on the case.
- Digital Media & Production Coordinator search: I still expect to have someone in place very soon.